THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No non-Governmental steel industries in Chhattisgarh have imported duty free raw materials from abroad to complete the export of steel pipes during the last three years.

(b) to (e) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Supply of Iron and Steel to WBSIDC

4792. SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether a request has been made by West Bengal Government for allocation of Iron and Steel materials to West Bengal Small Industries Development Corporation (WBSIDC) in the interest of small scale sector in the State; and

(b) if so, the details of the same and action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The West Bengal Small Industries Development Corporation (WBSIDC) Ltd. had not been lifting iron and steel materials since 1998-99 under the scheme operated by Government. Hence, during 2004-05 the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) had been authorized to supply iron and steel materials to the small scale units of West Bengal. However, upon receipt of request from the Government of West Bengal, the case has been reconsidered and for the year 2005-06, an amount of 24,193 Metric Tonnes of iron and steel items have been allocated for supply to small scale units of West Bengal through the WBSIDC.

Steel Prices

4793. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Tata Steel has hiked its long-term contract prices by 20 per cent effective from April 1, 2005;

(b) if so, whether other PSUs and Joint Sector Steel Plants are likely to follow suit;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the impact of rise in steel prices on Indian Economy and common man?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. With effect from April 1, 2005 Tata Steel has increased the prices of its different products by 8-12%.

(b) and (c) With effect from April 1, 2005 Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has increased prices of its different products by 6-9% and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) has increased its prices by 5-6%. The price increase has been attributed to the increase in cost of raw materials and strong market conditions.

(d) While there are many institutional factors, which impact the growth of the National Economy, the rising prices of steel, which is mainly used in the infrastructure and manufacturing sectors, have not inhibited growth in these sectors. During 2002-03, when steel prices registered an average growth of 19% over the previous year, the growth in capital formation in steel related segments of Construction, Manufacturing, Transport, Storage and Communication and Electricity, Gas and Water was 10.42%.

The rise in steel prices has led to a number of representations from the consumer industries. In particular the construction sector, which uses about 60% of steel produced in the country, has strongly represented against the increase in prices.

Sinter plant at BSP

4794. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that SAIL had decided to revamp sinter plant-2 in Bhilai Steel Plant and to install air turbo compressor and oxygen turbo compressor at oxygen plant in Bokaro Steel Plant;

(b) if so, the details such as capacity, cost and date of commissioning;

(c) the amount allocated for the purpose;

(d) the date by which these are likely to start functioning; and

(e) ther contribution towards annual steel production?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Sinter Plant-II at Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) is proposed to be